

Module 3:

The Military History of Adak



from " The Forgotten War"

Content to be covered:

A summary of military activity during WWII and the following years in the Aleutians and specifically on Adak.

Objectives:

- To become informed of Adak's significant history during and post World War II
- To gain historic reference of the UXO remaining on Adak
- To introduce a dialogue regarding safety issues surrounding UXO; both during the World War, through the subsequent Cold War years to the present.

Teacher's Guide:

Students should be exposed to background information about World War II and the following years of military occupation of the island. This can be done through lectures, student reference books, textbooks, and videos.

Students can work in discussion groups analyzing points which they find interesting about the military history of Adak: i.e. the confidential nature of the base during WWII, the use of the base as a hub to protect the Aleutian chain from being attacked by the Japanese and the use of Adak as a communication center during the Cold War.

Students should be given background information on the Aleutian Campaign during World War II, through the use of teacher chosen reference material. Through this information children will learn that Adak was used as the staging area for the Aleutian campaign. Tons of supplies for the war were brought to Adak and used or stored. The list of munitions included projectiles, (small arms, mortars and artillery rounds) grenades and bombs.

The teacher can initiate a discussion of safety considerations for all UXO. What would soldiers need to be aware of when handling munitions? What must we be aware of now on the island regarding UXO?

Enrichments and Extensions:

Children can interview WWII veterans on any of the many chat lines devoted to conversations with retired military personnel. They can specifically seek out men and women who served on Adak during WWII and subsequent years on Adak.

In addition to literature and oral presentations, the teacher can integrate this unit with other disciplines. The children can be encouraged to develop stories about Adak's history in writing.

Interesting Facts:

- By the end of April 1943, Adak, now the center of Army, Air Force, and Navy operations in the Aleutians, was maintaining a garrison of 19,067 Army personnel and 7,811 Navy.
- It took just 14 days to build an operable airstrip on Adak. The first bombers were flying for runs over Kiska after the perforated steel landing mat was laid down.

Resources:

Cohen, Stan *The Forgotten War: A Pictorial History of World War II in Alaska: Pictorial History Publishing Company, 1981*

Dolar, Edward F. *America in World War II. (Connecticut: The Millbrook Press, 1992).*

Hills, Ken. *Wars That Changed the World: World War II. (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1988).*

Isserman, Maurice. *America at War: World War II. (New York: Facts on File, 1991).*

Levitin, Sonia. *Journey to America. (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co, 1970).*

Weatherford, Doris. *American Women and World War II. (New York: Facts on File, 1990).*